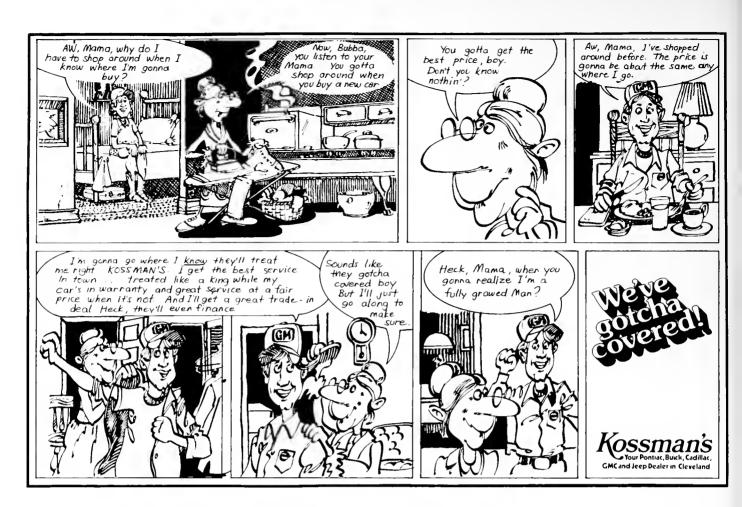
Deta Scene



ALL OVER MISSISSIPPI, IT'S A TIME TO DANCE.
See story inside.









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FORUM:

A Message from the Editor

The members of the staff of DELTA SCENE magazine — Dr. Curt Lamar, Editor; Cary Thomas Cefalu, Business Manager; Susie Thomas Ranager, Art Director; and Loyce Braswell, Circulation Manager — along with the contributing editors and the Editorial Board representing Delta Scene Corporation, take this opportunity to wish our readers, advertisers, and supporters the happiest of holidays and the most prosperous and fulfilling New Year. We appreciate all of you and what you mean to DELTA SCENE.

TO THE EDITOR

more of Delta Scene, and we wish you continued success.

Sincerely, Curt Guenther Public Relations Director MDIC

Dear Editor;

Thank you for an excellent spread on Mississippi Delta Junior College. We have received nothing but favorable comments on it, and we appreciate the opportunity to let Deltans know about their community college through your publication.

One additional comment about the article. I neglected to credit the photographs to the graphic artist responsible for them. He is Delta State graduate Lawrence Kenneth, currently the Media Center Director at MDJC, an indispensible person at the junior college as well as a fine photographer.

Like Deltans everywhere, we at MDJC look forward to seeing much

Dear Sir:

Just received four copies of Delta Scene Magazine.

You have written a beautiful article about me and my place called "The It" written by Ms. Rebecca Hood-Adams (Summer Issue '78) which I thought was very good and delightful.

I have had five nieces and a nephew who have graduated from Delta State. We are all proud of them.

Sincerely, Alma Ferris **Publisher** Delta Scene Corporation

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Managing Editor Cary Thomas Cefalu

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Holcombe, Bill Davidge, Malra Treece,
Louise B. Mayhall; Mary Jayne
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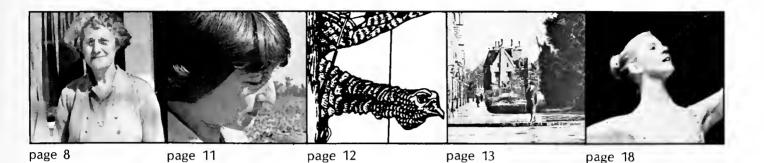
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Holiday 1978 • Volume 5, No. 3



Calendar of Events

The who, what, when, where and why of whats happening in the Delta.

Reminiscences of Benoit: People, Places and Things Dr. Katherine Coward nostalgically reviews her years as a school teacher in Benoit.

Plants Don't Bleed

Louise B. Mayhall profiles Christine Humy, Plant Pathologist.

12 Turkey Fever
Dr. Bill Davidge warns us of the dangers of a peculiar fever that strikes during turkey season.

13 Passport by Proxy Maxine B. Holcombe delights us with a tale of a very unusual librarian.

14 Thanksgiving Dinner in the Delta: A Feast from Faraway Lands

Rececca Hood-Adams tingles our tastebuds with ethnic recipes from our region.

The Rainbow

Kerry Wright spins a tale about a small boy's first rainbow.

A Time to Dance 18

Mary Jayne Whittington informs us that dance is here to stay in Mississippi.

20 Gallery Gourmet

Rebecca Hood-Adams lets us in on a secret — the great food at Clarksdale's Rest Haven.

21 Memories of a Hard-time Delta Christmas

Joe Robinson takes us back for a look at a different kind of Christmas.

COVER PHOTO: Members of the University of Southern Mississippi dance troupe perform in the Christmas favorite, The Nutcracker. For the story, see page 18. Photo by Larry Mulligan

RECREATION & SPORTS

November 22-26, 1978

Annual Turkey Day Adventures, Nantahala River Gorge, North Carolina. Canoeing, backpacking, rock climbing, "snow skiing". Sponsored by the Outback and Kayak Club, Delta State University. For more information contact Dave Heflin, Box B-2 Delta State University, Cleveland, MS 38733

December 3, 1978

"Christmas Holidays Run" in Greenville. There will be a 2-Mile Event and a 10,000 Meter (6.2 Miles) Event. Awards to finishers will be presented. Information pertaining to this event can be obtained by contacting Al Kossman, Jr., Kossman Insurance, 508 Washington Avenue, Greenville, MS 38701. This event will be sponsored by Judge Little Sporting Goods and will be conducted by the Delta Striders, Inc.

December 16-24, 1978

Breckenridge Ski Trip. Open to students or non-students who do not have exam conflicts. \$397 includes everything except food. Sponsored by the Outback and Kayak Club, Delta State University. For more information contact Dave Heflin, Box B-2, Delta State University, Cleveland, MS 38733

February 18, 1979

"George Washington's Birthday Eve Run" in Indianola. The Delta Striders, Inc., will conduct this event. Complete details can be obtained by contacting the Coordinators of this event, who are:

1. Mr. and Mrs. Champ Terney — 100 Barbary Lane, Indianola

March 17, 1979

"St. Patrick's Day Run" at Warfield Point Park, U.S. Highway 82 West in Greenville. Awards will be presented to finishers. Information pertaining to this event can be obtained by contacting Mal Kretschmar, 238 Taylor Street, Greenville, MS 38701. There will be a 2-mile event and a 10,000 meter (6.2 miles) event. This event will be conducted by the Delta Striders, Inc.

LECTURES, SYMPOSIUMS, & MEETINGS

December 7, 1978

Lunch with Books, 12 o'clock noon, Carnegie Public Library, Clarksdale, MS.

December 7, 1978

"A Discussion with Mississippi's Authors" featuring the Greenville author Ellen Douglas at the William Alexander Percy Memorial Library in Greenville, MS at 7:30 p.m.

December 7, 1978

Lunch with Books, 12 o'clock noon, Carnegie Public Library, Clarksdale, MS.

January 4, 1979

Lunch with Books, 12 o'clock noon, Carnegie Public Library, Clarksdale, MS.

lanuary 18, 1979

Greenville Area Chamber of Commerce Annual Meeting. Speaker Jack Anderson, 7:00 p.m. Greenville High School Auditorium, Greenville, MS.

lanuary 30, 1979

Greenville author Shelby Foote will be featured in the second of the Mississippi's Authors Discussion series. This free program is sponsored by the Percy Library and the Mississippi Committee for Humanities. 7:30 p.m. William Alexander Percy Library, Greenville, MS.

February 1, 1979

Lunch with Books, 12 o'clock, Carnegie Public Library, Clarksdale, MS.

February 26, 1979

"An Evening with Jack Anderson," featuring Jack Anderson.
Co-sponsored by DSU Special Programs Committee and DSU Union at 7:30 p.m. in Broom Auditorium, Delta State University, Cleveland, MS.

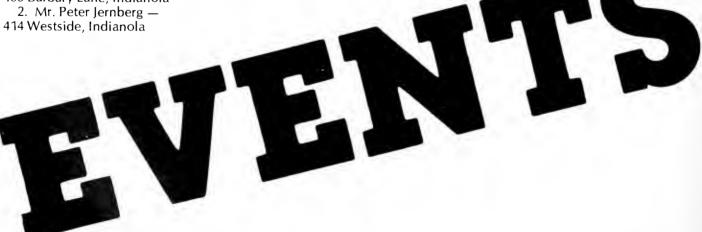
CONCERTS, DANCE, & THEATRE

November 22, 1978

Symphony Orchestra of Sofia, Bulgaria. Sponsored by Delta Music Association, 8:00 p.m., Greenville High School Auditorium, Greenville, MS.

December 4, 1978

Greenville Symphony Holiday Concert, selections from "The Messiah" by Georg Frederick Handel featuring the symphony and the combined choirs of Delta State University and Mississippi Valley State University, Greenville High Auditorium, Greenville, MS.



December 5, 1978

Delta Chorale and Delta Singers present "The Messiah" in Broom Auditorium, Delta State University Cleveland, MS, 8:00 p.m.

December 7, 1978

DSU Concert Band in Broom Auditorium Delta State University, Cleveland, MS 8:00 p.m.

January 15, 1979

Roberta Peters sings with the Greenville Symphony, High School Auditorium, Greenville, MS.

January 22-23, 1979

"Jim Thorpe, All American," performance by the Performing Arts Repertory Theatre of New York. Co-sponsored by DSU Special Programs Committee and Crosstie Arts Council. Jan. 22 performances at 2:00 p.m. and 8:00 p.m. and the Jan. 23 performances at 11:00 a.m. and 1:00 p.m.

January 30, 1979

DSU Percussion Ensemble in Concert, Broom Auditorium, Delta State University, Cleveland, MS 8:00 p.m.

February 8, 1979

DSU Faculty Recital, Ronald Peters, piano and Lyndell Watkins, piano, Zeigel Auditorium, Delta State University, Cleveland, MS 8:00 p.m.

Feberuary 15-17, 1979

Mississipppi High School Honor Band and Honor Choir Clinic, Zeigel Hall, Delta State University, Cleveland, MS.

February 20-24, 1979

"Cabaret" starring Gary Collins and Mary Ann Mobley. Sponsored by DSU Drama Department, DSU Music Department, and the Crosstie Arts Council. Job Hall, Delta State University, Cleveland, MS at 8:00 P.M.

March 5, 1979

Greenville Symphony concert featuring Leventritt Foundation artist Santiago Rodriguez as guest pianist. Greenville High School Auditorium, Greenville, MS.

March 13, 1979

Rostal and Schaefer, duo pianists at Greenville High School Auditorium, Greenville, MS at 8:00 p.m.

March 19, 1979

Fred Waring and the Young Pennsylvanians at Greenville High School Auditorium, Greenville, MS at 8:00 p.m.

ART EXHIBITS

December

Watercolors by Californian Jean Soresen, Carnegie Public Library, Clarksdale, MS.

December 1, 1978

Unveiling of completed sculpture from Rouse Construction Company, Mississippi Museum of Art, Jackson, MS, 10:00 a.m.

December 3-20, 1978

Christmas Bazaar, Fielding L. Wright Art Center, Delta State University, Cleveland, MS.

December 17, 1978

Edible Art Exhibition, The Museum School, Jackson, MS.

January 14-30, 1979

Eugenia Summer, Painter from MUW and Bob Berguson, small paintings from Louisiana Tech University, Fielding L. Wright Art Center, Delta State University, Cleveland, MS.

February

Paintings by Bill Lester, Carnegie Public Library, Clarksdale, MS.

February 7-28, 1979

DSU Art Student's Show, MS High School Competition, Fielding L. Wright Art Center, Delta State University, Cleveland, MS.

CRAFT SHOWS, HOLIDAY FESTIVALS AND SPECIAL EVENTS

December 1, 1978

Greenwood Band Festival, all-day parades, special events, food, and fireworks. Sponsored by the Junior Chamber of Commerce. Downtown, Greenwood, MS

December

Christmas at Florewood, 1850's plantation life, Christmas decorations, food. Florewood River Plantation State Park, Greenwood, MS.

December

Christmas on the Bayou. Christmas floats on the water lighted each night, except the first week of December. Deer Creek, Leland, MS.

December 2-3, 1978

Chimneyville Crafts Festival at the Trade Mart in Jackson, MS. Dec. 2 from 10:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. Dec. 3 from noon to 6:00 p.m. Admission is \$1.50 for adults and \$3.00 for a family pass.

December 6, 1978

Annual arrival of Santa by barge on Deer Creek. There will be a short musical program then Santa's arrival and candy for the children then the lights on all the floats. These will be on every night until New Year's Day.

Christmas Eve

Luminaries on the Bayou. Myriads of lights line the banks of the Bayou and sparkle around town to celebrate Christmas Eve, Downtown Inverness, MS.

Editor's Note:

The following reminiscences, to be presented in two parts, are from a soon-to-be published book, They Touched My Life, by Dr. Katherine Coward, Professor of English at Delta State University.

I entered the Mississippi Delta on a slow train, the Peavine, which I boarded in Memphis, Tennessee. I wondered what Benoit would be like as we moved along the tracks. How my father's farewell resounded in my ears! I tried to convince myself that I was not going into a mosquito-infested area and that my new assignment, although farther away from home than I had been, was not like going to Europe. The train went so slowly that I almost had time to plan the entire year's work before I arrived at Leland, from which the train backed all the way to Greenville, where a former Ole Miss fellow student, Gladys Farmer, and the Superintendent's wife were to meet me.

I stepped slowly from the train and advanced with uncertainty into the railroad station and the Superintendent. He laughed and apologized. His voice gave confidence and assurance that my welcome committee would be there any minute. As I was hanging up the



SCHOOL DAYS 1953-54

Dr. Coward

receiver, Gladys, in her usual friendly but loud manner, knocked on the door of the telephone booth. She was smiling, an infectious,

That drive to Benoit on Highway 1 was a never-to-be-forgotten one. Gladys and Lib chattered incessantly; I listened and looked. I was awed by the flat land and its rich appearance. Finally, we reached Delta and Pine Land at Scott. Delta and Pine Land they described as an English syndicate and one of the world's largest cotton plantations. "Some of our best students," explained Mrs. Dribben, "come from Scott."

Looking at the beauty of Lake Bolivar and the tall cypress trees at its edge brought a thrill of pleasure to me, a new arrival to the Delta of Mississippi.

"We are almost there," Gladys said triumphantly. There was Benoit — a village hardly a block in length. It looked dirty, unimpressive — and even unprogressive. My heart sank. Was this the place I had traded for the city of Grenada? But I rembered what Mr. Dribben had said when he hired me, "The people make the town." I would soon know.

We stopped at a neat, white frame house, where I was to board and where I would room with Gladys. Little did I realize the many happy hours, the good times,

Reminiscen People, Pla

unknown. Gladys was not in the waiting room with Mrs. Dribben, the Superintendent's wife, to meet me. The slick, hard benches in the waiting room became unbearable after fifteen minutes of sitting. I wondered what had happened. One of my strong attributes had always been punctuality. "Are Delta people never on time?" I mused. I was anxious! Ten more minutes passed. Without further deliberation, I walked to the pay telephone and called Mr. Dribben, the

sincere grin, as she spoke rapidly, "I am sorry that we ran late; we got interested in buying clothes at Nelms and Blum and let the time slip up on us." Many, many times later I was to hear Delta ladies explain their lack of punctuality in the same way.

Gladys put her arm around me and led me to meet the Superintendent's wife. There Lib stood. She was an attractive woman whose searching brown eyes suggested joviality and curiosity.



"Miss Mollie" and "Mr. Abe"

the bad times, the laughing moments I would experience as a boarder in the Speckter House. under the ownership and management of Mr. and Mrs. Abe Speckter.

It was a modest home, but very neat and attractive. Miss Mollie was unusually pleasant. She had a cheerful voice and calm blue eyes. Her white hair was cut in a stylish way and a hearing aid was visible behind her right ear. The hearing aid seemed to buzz incessantly. However, there was something about her that appealed to the heart fo the new Benoit High School English teacher. She made the newcomer to the Speckter House



Meals around the Speckter Boarding House table provided many good times.

that year. When I walked inside Benoit High School, Superintendent Dribben greeted me with a smile and an informality to which I was unaccustomed. Previously in my career, everything had been formal and business-like. Now there was an informal conversation that somehow always seemed to produce laughter — happy laughter. Rather timid and very obviously reserved, I, the new English teacher, realized that I must change. I was later to learn that Superintendent W.B. Dribben was the person who could and would bring about the desired change in my personality.

After Mr. Dribben introduced me to several of the high school teachers, all of whom were unusually cordial and friendly, he announced to all of them that when the bell rang, they and all high school students would join all elementary students in the gymnasium-auditorium for an assembly program. It was a lively group — a happy student body but one who showed immediate respect to their leader. When Superintendent Dribben stood, all talking stopped. And then the



"Prof" George Rodgers

big and meritorious in all of its activities? Would enthusiasm and accomplishment be stressed and rewarded in the academic as well as the extra-curricular? Ten years of teaching in this small school were to prove very rewarding and productive; this beginning was to continue, not merely to be a show.

Throughout my first semester at Benoit High School there was constant reference to George T. Rodgers, affectionately called "Prof" by his friends at Benoit. They all seemed to be pleased that he was returning from service, and yet there appeared to be a certain awe about his coming back to be the

Katherine Coward

feel warm and welcome. Mr. Abe was a rugged-type man. He liked to talk, read, and drink - not excessively but to keep his spirits high. He liked to read current literature, not the kind one would categorize as classical or "good literature." So this was the Speckter House!

After I had settled in the Speckter House and had become familiar with the town of Benoit, "the day" finally came. I was about to meet all the students I would be teaching

Benoit High School Band, composed of some forty members played. The new English teacher was amazed. There were fewer than a hundred students in high school. How could there be such a large band? I looked; I examined all the band members. There must have been half of the band who were students in grades four through eight. Then there was a happy thought — one of pride that flashed through my mind. Would Benoit High School be this

principal. Little did Benoit High's English teacher realize that a bachelor — a retired army major would soon be on the faculty of Benoit High School.

After Christmas holidays, a new boarder joined the inhabitants of the Speckter House. I had heard many tales about a dashing Romeo, but, of greater importance to me, about a severe school principal. Now he stood before me — Retired Major George T. Rodgers, new Principal of Benoit High School. 1

photos courtesy of Katherine Coward

"eye-balled" him carefully: he was tall - very tall in fact - somewhat grey, rather thin, and slightly stooped. He had magnetic blue eves, a broad smile, and a friendly manner. He used a cane, which was later to become a legend around Benoit High. He did not appear to be as severe as he had been presented to me, but time was to prove to me that he could be severe if the need arose. Yet I was also to learn:

"Yet he was kind, or if severe, Naught.

The love he bore to learning was in Fault."

Little did I realize at this moment of meeting Mr. Rodgers how much our lives were to cross in the halls of Benoit High School, the Speckter Boarding House, the homes of Benoit, and places of interest and entertainment in the Mississippi Delta.

Prof liked to talk, and he wanted to be in on everything. I was a good listener. I also served not only as English teacher and librarian but also as senior sponsor, adviser for the school publication "The Corral," debate coach, and director of the senior play. Since I was in on everything, it was only natural that Prof and I would have many mutual interests and become friends — the kind who had their "ins" and "outs" but whose "outs" were usually of short duration.



Katherine Coward. Senior Class Sponsor

I did not have a car, but Prof always drove the latest and sportiest Mercury or Thunderbird available. Because Benoit was almost inaccessible and I had no car, he offered to give me rides to Clarksdale, where I caught a bus to Memphis, my home. He drove fast. very fast, and he always asked me to



Benoit High School

be on the alert for highway patrolmen. Soon the ride became longer when The Panolian in Batesville agreed to print "The Corral." I would ride to Batesville with Prof. explain the lay out of the school newspaper to Mr. Holt, the owner of The Panolian, then catch a bus for Memphis.

Lalso knew Prof well through our going to church together. He offered all the boarders at the Speckter House a ride to the Benoit Union Church each Sunday. Several went, but they always "reserved" a place on the front seat of the car for me. Usually we all sat on the back row in the church. Prof sang loudly and usually held notes slightly longer than most singers. My shoulders jerked automatically when the minister made bad errors in grammar. Students swore the Prof's loud singing and my jerking had resulted in pulling loose that pew in the church. But they always seemed happy to have us in the little community church where they worshipped.

The town and the entire student body teased me unmercifully; they were really working hard to make a match. But there was never more than a close and abiding friendship between Prof and me.

One of Prof's outstanding attributes was punctuality. He expected everybody else to be punctual also. If a teacher was one minute late when she was on duty. he was standing in the hall pointing at the clock with his cane. Also, when he asked for registers on Wednesday, he really wanted them on Monday. This was a situation

which new teachers in the school did not understand, and I always tried to explain to newcomers before they were reprimanded.

He was a very dedicated teacher. but a little military with classroom discipline. Time after time he dismissed his math classes by saying, "Rise and pass out quietly." One day a group of students, the most mischievous and yet one of the brightest at Benoit High School. did just that; they all rose and fell to the floor. My room was directly across from his and I went over to see what had happened. I never before or afterwards saw his face as red. But later he laughed heartily, too.

No student who ever attended Benoit High School would ever forgive me if I failed to mention Prof and his "Bull Pen." For some students the punishment was like being in jail for a four-to-six-year sentence. It was a type of punishment for misbehavior which kept a student subtracting and subtracting some more. Dependent upon the nature of the "crime," the culprit was required to subtract one and a half from as little as a hundred to as much as six thousand. Prof let "The punishment fit the crime." and many students spent every vacant and waking moment subtracting and checking. The checking was very important, for a mistake doubled the original number from which the student was required to subtract. How they grumbled! They still remember, too, but now with pleasure and laughter.

Plant pathologist, Christine Humy, and Robert T. Kincade examine soybeans on the Hollywood Plantation near Greenville.

"PLANTS DON'T BLEED"

Louise B. Mayhall

Ask a petite and attractive brunette, Christine Humy, Plant Pathologist, why she decided upon a career and you will get an interesting and somewhat humorous answer. "Because plants don't bleed." But let her story tell why, since there is a good reason for her remark. The daughter of B.G. and Ardyce-Jean Humy of Peoria, Illinois. Chris's father is a representative of the Caterpillar Tractor Company, and his work has taken him to many places, including Europe. The family even lived for a very short time in Jackson, Mississippi, when Chris, as she is known to relatives and friends, was very young.

But the most important aspect of her education was gained in Switzerland, where Chris, her two sisters, and a younger brother attended the International School in Geneva, while her father was a company representative for Europe. It was here that Chris became a student of languages, learning to speak fluent French, some German, and Russian. She also became interested in the arts, music, drama and dancing. This experience was to have a significant impact on her life.

After a number of years in Geneva, Chris returned to the United States. She attended and received her degree in Biology from



photo by Larson Photographers

Then it was back to Geneva, where she worked for a year doing research on Parkinson's Disease in a Psychiatric Clinic. However, after being required to dissect live rats, seeing the blood, and feeling sorry for the creatures, she said, "I decided to change horses in midstream." Consequently, she returned to the United States to enter the University of Illinois at Champaign to take her MS in Plant Pathology. Since that time she has been affiliated with the Chevron

Chemical Company, located on a

plantation between Leland and

Greenville, which the company

leases from Henry Hammett.

Grinnell College, in Grinnell, Iowa.

Up at dawn, Chris can be seen trudging through muddy rice and soybean fields, then back to the laboratories to evaluate the beneficial use of chemicals to control fungi. Some fields are left untreated in order to compare them with treated ones, and diseases are recorded. Then the night comes. Like Cinderella at the ball, she is now seen beautifully dressed in a long cotton frock, dancing until the wee hours at the Cotton Wives' Plantation Ball, or with a group of young friends at a popular night spot.

Not only does Chris work in the Delta area, she also goes into Arkansas, Texas, Louisiana, Oklahoma, Illinois, and Missouri. On these trips she confers with

college and university professors and extension department personnel. Since coming to Greenville, a place she likes, she has become involved in numerous civic and cultural endeavors, singing in the choir at St. James Episcopal Church, playing the violin in the Greenville Symphony Orchestra. Inc., working on the membership drive for the Delta Music Association, and taking part in Iunior Auxiliary Follies, a fund-raising affair. In addition her hobbies are tennis, dancing, bicycling, and doing needlework.

Asked how she feels about her work in the Delta, she says, "It is exciting, especially working with rice and cotton, for there is a great potential for future growth with the building in Greenville of a plant to process Uncle Ben's Rice (a twenty million dollar operation) and prospects of a soybean facility in Rosedale. But cotton is still King. And there is a need for all three."

Mrs. Mayhall, a longtime resident of Greenville, has been associated over the years with the Memphis Commercial Appeal's Greenville branch as a writer. She is a member of the National League of Penwomen and serves actively in the Greenville Garden Clubs and the Greenville Junior Auxiliary.



Bill Davidge

Turkey fever breaks out in the Mississippi Delta during the spring of every year. This is a condition of the human intellect which completely dominates rationality, leaving only minor traces of sensible behavior, in some individuals during certain calendar days. The persons afflicted are commonly called turkey hunters and the vulnerable days are designated, by wildlife authorities, as turkey season.

All ages, both sexes, and even those who are usually considered level headed and very sensible are potential victims of this disabling disease. Many advanced cases have been observed; however, only one typical case which was reported recently by a Delta hunter is described in this article.

L. B. Fondren, a Cleveland. Mississippi, resident of sixty years, is a gentleman of eighty-seven whose physical agility, mental resiliency, wisdom, and general good judgment would serve as sufficient standards for the selection of astronauts. His home and garden are models of efficiency — a place for everything and everything in its place. His daily routine is normally a blueprint for how to manage vour time.

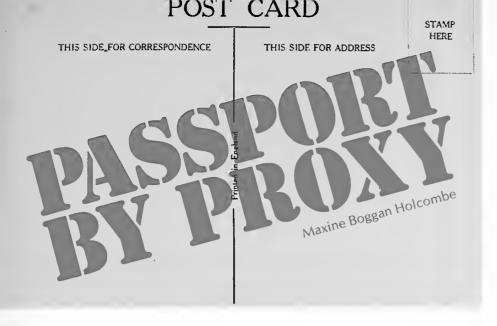
However, during critical turkey days. Mr. Fondren's behavior becomes very strange; his decisions are not sound, and his wife for more than sixty years, Lily, says that he acts downright silly. As an example of this irrational behavior, he went into an hypnotic state on the first day of turkey season last year. He rose at 3:00 a.m. like a million dollar man to don camouflage hunting wear, prepare and consume breakfast, fix lunch, assemble gear, and depart, all within thirty minutes, presenting an exemplary exercise in painstaking planning, perfect timing, and machine-like

By 4:00 a.m., he was perched on a limb of a fallen tree in a river bottom behind the levee, alert as a cat to any movement or sound within 200 yards - ahead or behind. His figure blended into the brush better than a jungle fighter. Enchanting mating sounds from his forty-year-old boxcall echoed throughout the still forest, convincing the wisest and most wary old bearded tom turkey in the woods that a lonely, beautiful hen was concealed in the shadowed center of that clump of brush. The exchange of calls between the cunning old hunter and the smart old bird was a one-on-one battle of wits. A soft, demure hen call-a reverberating gobble — twenty

minutes of silence — a few clucks from the box followed by more silence and waiting. Another gobble definitely closer now answered by one perfect beckoning call from the seasoned wood box.

Finally, "amour" overcame caution and the king of game birds strutted into full view in the center of a sunlit clearing — a magnificent spectacle. As he surveyed the field, searching for his fair lady with dilated eyes and an umbrella size tail fan spread high, his head was proudly held and his shiny black beard swung gracefully from a thick copperplated neck. Dagger sharp spurs glistened like diamonds in the sunlight. He swelled his chest, stretched his neck, and gobbled a thundering challenge to all other toms. Chills spread down Mr. Fondren's backbone.

L.B.'s heart beat a marching band cadence, his "hawk eyes" turned almost out of their sockets, and his neck was twisted at a painful angle to keep the prancing bird in sight. Still, no humanlike moves were detected by the wise old tom, and he reduced the range of separation between gamesters human and bird — to forty yards, which was well within full choke 12 gauge limits. The old model 12 slowly rose and swung onto the



Miss Lou Bassett was one of the most adventurous souls in Macon City. She pored over road maps. sent off for brochures, and answered ads for foreign travel.

She was Macon City's librarian and was the instigator of countless literary treks into bush country, the frozen tundras, the "concrete caverns" of New York, the history steeped by-ways of London, and the wide boulevards of Paris. No land was too remote, no metropolis too sophisticated to be off limits for Miss Lou's insatiable curiosity about the world and its people.

Small grubby hands reached over 🤌 her library desk to receive a book about a Chinese boy even though the same hands had just received a small tome on "Baseball's Boy Wonder." The latter had been the real reason for that visit to the library, but the book with the little Oriental flying his dragon kite had been suggested by Miss Lou.



Teenagers coming reluctantly to satisfy their English teachers' requirement for a book review were met with understanding by Miss Lou. She always gave everyone understanding, but no frowns or grumbling from a fifteen-year-old was met with sympathy. She left

sympathy for the poor, starving, or sick. If you could read and were able-bodied, she saw no reason for literary laziness. But her understanding of the change in times, today's distractions of T.V. and stereo, made her double her efforts to open vistas to the narrow. self-centered adolescent.



Some way she made a book seem like a free ticket — with visa and passport to a fresh adventure. She was a wonder, they all said.

Strangely, Miss Lou never took those many trips she excited others to take. She had been to Memphis a few times, mostly on some special family errand to a store or a doctor's office. But the forty-five miles there and the ride back by bus for her were filled with a keen awareness of landscape, towns, and people. A sense of transportation, adventure, and travel permeated the atmosphere around her for weeks after one of these rare trips.

As time passed, other Bassett family members had died, and Miss Lou was alone in the small cottage a block from her work, her world the library.

"Alone" is really not the word to use in relation to Miss Lou.

Probably of all the words in her vocabulary it was the least used. and never in reference to herself. In truth, she wasn't alone. All day she was surrounded by the comings and goings of library patrons, the phone calls asking for information that she either had at the tip of her tongue or eagerly ferretted out and gladly imparted to the questioner.

When Miss Lou retired a few vears ago, many wondered how she'd pass her time. No need to worry. She became a patron of the library. She read the newest novels (sometimes with a head shake of disapproval for a waste of talent or a writer's reliance on four-letter words). She pored over **National Geographic** and travel magazines. Her adventurous spirit was undaunted.

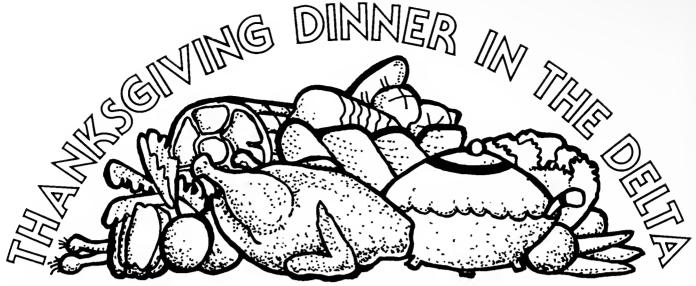
New folks in town often asked some native who the old girl was who bent her white head over stacks of scrapbooks as she rocked back and forth on her side porch of a summer afternoon. Most oldtimers could answer that with ease, "She's doing her Children's Rosary," they'd say. Then they'd add (so there would be no misunderstanding of Miss Lou's religious loyalties). "She's not a Catholic — been a First Baptist all her life. She just calls all her postcards in those books her Children's Rosary since they remind her of the local kids who've sent them to her for years."

Others in Macon City stopped by from time to time to chat with Miss Lou and get the latest news on friends that had left their town and



settled elsewhere. Or some to know which person was touring Europe for two weeks or camping in Colorado or swimming on the Gulf Coast.

The scrapbooks were full of cards sent to Miss Lou for years. The one from Hong Kong said: "Thought



A Feast from Faraway Lands

illustration by Susie T. Ranager

Rebecca Hood-Adams

The Mississippi Delta has long been known as an ethnic mixing pot. These fertile flatlands are home to people of varied races, colors. and creeds. Although the community where I grew up was hardly large enough to qualify as cosmopolitan, it offered exposure to as many cultures and ethnic groups as any New York borough. My best friend in high school was Greek. I went to the movies with a young Jewish boy, a German family lived two houses down, and Mr. Wong made change behind the counter of the little store near the playground.

Turkey, candied yams, and pumpkin pie are traditional Thanksgiving fare. But any holiday that draws families together also reflects the unique heritage of the celebrants. Even if your family is as WASP as white bread, a good Delta cook welcomes the opportunity to flavor her Thanksgiving Feast with a special side-dish. Ethnic cooking can offer a creative change from the standard drumstick, and provide a welcome alternative to turkey hash.

Sukkot, or the Feast of Booths, is the annual autumn harvest festival celebrated by Jews. This week-long holiday, representing both the fresh start of a new year and the harvest of old, was celebrated this year October 15-22. Mrs. Aaron Kline of Clarksdale prepared a family favorite dessert from a recipe handed down from her Lithuanian mother.

"This honey cake symbolizes our hopes for a good and sweet year," says Mrs. Kline, who settled in the Delta more than thirty years ago. Although Mrs. Kline says she cooks best by adding "A little of this and a little of that," she gave us more exact measurements for the recipe below.

HONEY CAKE

3 cups flour
1½ teaspoons baking powder
1 teaspoon soda
½ teaspoon ground allspice
½ teaspoon ginger (optional)
1 teaspoon cinnamon
¼ teaspoon salt
1 cup of strong, cold coffee
1 cup honey
1 cup shortening
4 eggs (separated)
1 cup brown sugar
½ lemon (use juice and rind)

Sift together the dry ingredients. Cream in shortening and sugar. Add the four egg yolks and honey. Mix well. Alternately add coffee, flour, and lemon juice and rind. Beat egg whites until stiff and fold in. Put

into two greased and floured loaf pans and bake in the oven at 350 degrees for one hour or until the cake springs back when touched.



Mrs. Chafik Chamoun, also of Clarksdale, came to Mississippi from Lebanon twenty-five years ago. She and her husband and their six children will have a special prayer this Thanksgiving.

"We are thankful for everything we have gotten by coming to this country," says Mrs. Chamoun. "I am grateful for my children and the chance to raise them right. But especially this year we are hoping for peace in Lebanon." Mrs. Chamoun's mother and sister are still living there.

Although Mrs. Chamoun sells many Lebanese foods in the small grocery she and her husband run, her shish barak, homemade dough stuffed with meat and served in a yogurt mixture, is reserved for holidays.

SHISH BARAK

Dough
2 cups of plain flour
4 eggs
½ cup water

Meat Stuffing 1½ pounds of ground chuck 1 large onion 1 teaspoon salt 1/2 teaspoon black pepper 1/2 teaspoon garlic powder

Yogurt Mixture 1/2 gallon yogurt 1 tablespoon dry mint 2 tablespoons corn starch

First, mix together flour, eggs, and water. Then put aside.

In a skillet over a low fire lightly brown ground chuck, onion, salt, pepper, and garlic.

Roll dough out very thin with rolling pin and cut into small circles. Put one spoonful of meat mixture in center of each dough circle and fold over edges tightly.

Mix together yogurt, water, dry mint, and starch over a medium fire. Stir until mixture comes to a boil. Lower the fire and drop the stuffed dough into the yougurt and let cook for 25 minutes.

Makes enough for 8 to 10 people.



Although the Chinese do not have a native holiday equivalent to our Thanksgiving, Mrs. Chris Lee of Cleveland celebrates the American feast with her family. Mrs. Lee was born in Canton, China, and was raised in Hong Kong where she met her husband Morgan Lee fourteen years ago.

Chicken is often the main dish in any Chinese celebration," says Mrs. Lee. "But in China we use the head and all. My Mother would think it very bad luck to set a chicken dish on the table without the head being included." However, Mrs. Lee does not include all the parts of the chicken when she serves her dinners. She says the dried shrimp chips mentioned in the recipe are the Chinese equivalent of potato chips and are used for decoration.

CRISP CHICKEN

1 spring chicken (3-31/2 pounds) Chinese wine 2 tablespoons malt 1 tablespoon cornstarch

1/2 tablespoon Shanghai Vinegar (regular vinegar may be used) Oil for deep-frying 1 teaspoon minced ginger Dry shrimp chips salt

Condiments: 1/2 teaspoon black pepper from rolled peppercorns and 1/2 teaspoon salt.

Pour two big bowls of boiling water on the chicken to clean the oil out of the skin. Use a big towel to dry the chicken thoroughly. Mix malt, vinegar, Chinese wine, and cornstarch, and put on the outside of the chicken. Rub the chicken inside with some salt, Chinese wine and some ginger juice. Put in a windy place and let dry thoroughly (at least six hours).

When the chicken is dry put a tablespoon (Chinese kind) into the rear cavity. Heat oil for deep-frying and when the oil is hot, pour the hot oil through the spoon into the chicken body, allowing it to drain from the neck. Repeat four times. Then the chicken will be cooked from the inside. Pour the hot oil onto the outside of the chicken a few times until the whole chicken is a golden color (start with the two legs, front side, then the rest of the chicken) and is brown and crisp. Cut into small pieces and serve hot with shrimp chips. Pieces of chicken are dipped in condiments before they are eaten.



The Delta is also home to a large community of Italians whose good cooking reflects their heritage. Mrs. Joe Aguzzi of Cleveland shared with us a favorite recipe of her seven children and "Four and one-half grandchildren."

"This recipe can be varied by adding little pieces of cooked Italian Sausage, baked chicken, or sliced and fried eggplant," says Mrs. Aguzzi. "Some families may also like the taste of oregano."

LASAGNA

2 tablespoons oil 11/2 pounds ground chuck 1/2 cup finely chopped onion 1/4 cup finely chopped celery

1 or 2 cloves of garlic (also finely chopped) 1 teaspoon parsley 2 6-ounce cans tomato paste 2 cups water 3/4 teaspoon salt 1/2 teaspoon pepper 2 eggs ¾ pounds ricotto or cottage cheese 3/4 pounds sliced mozzerella cheese grated Romano Cheese 1 pound Lasagna noodles

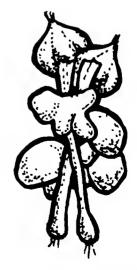
Brown ground beef in oil along with onion, garlic, celery, and parsley. Add tomato paste, 2 cups water, salt and pepper, and simmer about 11/2 hours.

Meanwhile, cook lasagna noodles in 6 or more quarts boiling, salted water. Cook until tender (about 15 minutes), stirring often to prevent sticking, Drain,

Mix eggs with ricotto. Arrange in a buttered baking dish in alternating layers of lasagna noodles, sauce, mozzerella, and ricotto. Sprinkle with grated Romano cheese.

Bake at 375 degrees for 20-30 minutes or until mozzerella is well melted. Cool slightly before cutting and serving.

When the Pilgrims dished up that first Thanksgiving feast, their table reflected the foods available and their own cultural orientation. Perhaps when you celebrate this harvest season you'll want to include dishes inspired by the many nationalities of your neighnbors. In the Mississippi Delta our ethnic mixing pot is truly a flavor feast.





The Rainbow

Kerry Wright

The four-year-old towhead and his Granddaddy were in the garden on a day when the heat of the sun seemed to sear everything in sight, when the air which settled over the small tenant farm was oppressive and stagnant, when dust rose in great billowing clouds as a car occasionally passed, settling slowly, penetrating the cracks in the wood-frame farmhouse and covering the discolored, drooping foliage which surrounded it with a dull film. The Granddaddy was hoeing his tomatoes and the boy was trying to do the same with a stick which served as his make-believe hoe. The elderly man grimaced as he slowly straightened up from his hoeing position. Wiping his perspiring brow with the back of his hand he exclaimed, "This has got to be the hottest day

of the hottest summer I ever seen,

Little Bill!"

"Me too!" the boy agreed enthusiastically.

"And I 'spect you seen a lot of 'em, huh?" the old man replied with a chuckle.

"Yep!" the boy answered confidently.

As the Granddaddy leaned against

his hoe to rest, he gazed intently at the western sky. Trying to copy his Granddaddy's stance, the boy followed the old man's gaze and saw a dark mass of clouds shrouding the horizon. Lightning flickered through the clouds; the distant sound of rumbling thunder slowly reverberated through the air. A gust of

If all the productions of THE NUTCRACKER that have been done at Christmas were laid end to end they would reach from here to Tchaikovsky, wherever that remarkable man may be. THE NUTCRACKER (or NUTS, as it is affectionately called at the barre) is. of course, the beloved ballet for which Tchaikovsky composed the score, working closely with Marius Petipa before the choreographer's death. For years the story of Clara and her broken toy were just about synonymous with ballet in most

millions of television viewers outstanding programs such as DANCE IN AMERICA and LIVE FROM WOLF TRAP FARM.

The country is hooked.

Of the phenomenal growth in interest and activity, the Mississippi Arts Commission's Program Director for the Performing Arts Fran Quigley has said, "No special training is required for watching dance and enjoying it. With no need to go through the classroom. dance has a hot line to our hearts and minds and spirits," Ms. Quigley.



A member of Mimi Garrard's avant garde dance troupe performs in "Flux."

On the Gulf Coast, at the University of Southern Mississippi, in Jackson . . . All over the Magnolia State it's

by Mary Jayne Whittington

minds. Maybe SWAN LAKE and the Sadler Wells Company were peripherally present.

Not so today. The times they have "a-changed." In America, from the mid-sixties to the mid-seventies audiences for professional companies sprang from one million to fifteen million. In 1967 the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) created the Dance Touring Program (DTP) which made funds available for professional companies to tour, reaching audiences that formerly had little, if any, exposure to ballet and modern dance. Grants from NEA and major corporations have brought to

who is DTP contact in Mississippi adds, "Too, success has not spoiled dance. It's one art form that has kept its quality while increasing its quantity. To a great extent because of NEA and ETV, audiences are seeing an undiluted and unpolluted art."

In Mississippi, the reach for excellence is apparent in the work being done in the state capital by the Jackson Ballet Company. Under the artistic direction of Thalia Mara, the company is in residence at the new Mississippi Art Center, along with the Jackson Symphony, Mississippi Art Association, Opera South, and Mississippi Opera

Company. Funds for Ms. Mara's dancers are realized through Jackson Ballet School, Jackson Ballet Guild, and private sources. Revenue from performances and benefits, as well as aid from the Mississippi Arts Commission, also has helped put this troupe in the black.

lackson's subscription series this year includes guest stars from the American Ballet Theatre and New York City Ballet, and a performance by the Pittsburg Ballet's touring company. Of leaving New York and

have been announced another of her ventures, one of international significance, which is still in the planning stage as of this writing.

Meantime down in Biloxi, the Mississippi Coast Ballet is "movin' on." March 28th through April 1st of 1979, MCB will host the annual meeting of Southeastern Regional Ballet Association.

"This will be the first time SERBA has met in Mississippi", sayd MCB's founder and artistic director Delia (Mrs. Bennie) Stewart, who for eight years has been Executive Secretary

The University of Southern Mississippi is alone in the state in offering a BFA in Dance and a MFA with dance emphasis, "Both graduate and undergraduate programs provide the student with sound theory, intensive training and many opportunities to perform" says the Department of Theatre Arts' remarkable chairman, Dr. Blaine Quarnstrom.

Among the companies that USM has brought to the campus for residences is the Mimi Garrard Dance Company. The avant garde



Members of the Mississippi Coast Ballet are bringing added enjoyment to the lives of dance lovers along the Gulf Coast.

photo by Larry Sturgis

the erstwhile mainstream of dance, choreographer-dancer Mara says, "I'm happy about the change. This is where I want to be. We're moving into a time when all the most interesting things culturally — as well as industrially — will be happening in the South."

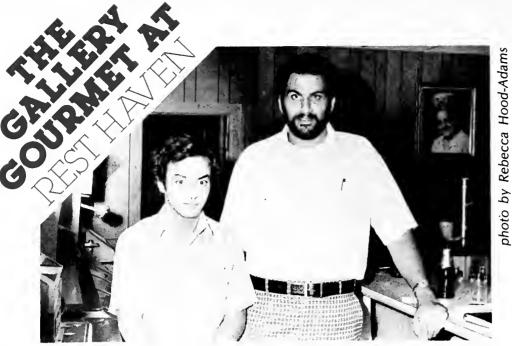
One thing is certain: Wherever Ms. Mara is, things will happen. Since coming south she has turned Robert Browning aside with a grasp that has equalled her reach. Between the deadline for this article and its publication date, there may

for the organization whose members are professional, semi-professional, and non-professional companies that can meet its standards.

"We're expecting eight hundred dancers, as well as New York critics and famous dance personalities. There'll be a Gala Performance featuring the Atlanta, Miami, Washington D.C., and Mississippi Coast Ballets," says the MCB director for whom the city of Biloxi has recently provided a company residence in the Magnolia Mall.

Garrard troupe is a synthesis of art and technology — a celebration of the twentieth century. Since its initial appearance in the state at the 1972 Arts Festival in Jackson, the New York-based company has opened eyes and stretched ears at Delta State and Ole Miss, as well as USM.

Wife of cybernetic sculptor James Seawright and a native of Greenwood, MS Garrard has said to admirers unaccustomed to



Joe Bagadady (left) and Woody Joseph (right) look forward to serving you at Rest Haven.

Rebecca Hood-Adams

It was a fast five bucks.
My friend Howard considers
himself somewhat of a gourmet.
He's dined in the best restaurants
from Paris to Tokyo, Alaska to
Brazil. So it was natural that he was
skeptical when I bragged that the
best coconut pie east of the
Mississippi could be found in Rest
Haven Restaurant in Clarksdale. His
doubts increased when we turned
off Highway 61 into the parking lot
of what appeared to be a modest.
truck stop. A small wager settled the
matter.

Every table and booth was occupied with Delta families enjoying home cooking at reasonable prices. Since more than 500 persons are served in Rest Haven between 6 a.m. and 9 p.m. Monday through Saturday, 1 had called ahead for a reservation. Although the tables fill up as fast as they are vacated, I wasn't worried about getting a seat. It was the coconut pie I didn't want to miss.

Rest Haven bakes 15 pies every day. Chocolate and coconut are always on the menu. Then there are "special" pies days. Tuesday is banana, Wednesday is apple, Thursday is lemon, and Friday is strawberry. If you expect to have coconut pie for dinner at 5 p.m. you'd better call ahead that afternoon and ask them to save you a slice. Then try to get through the

long hours until dessert without a "fat attack."

What can I say about Rest Haven's coconut pies, except that they rate genuine respect and should be eaten with reverent ceremony. There's the paper thin layers of pastery that make up the crust, then a layer of coconut. The custard filling would make your grandmother green with envy. Next comes another layer of coconut. topped with at least two inches of meringue and a final sprinkling of toasted coconut. This meringue, mind you, is not the too-sweet kind that turns your stomach in three bites. Nor is it the airy type that flattens out in a few hours of sitting on the shelf. (Admittedly, I cannot absolutely prove that statement. I have never observed Rest Haven pie sitting around uneaten long enough to test its meringue expiration date.)

Howard paid off.

For generations of Deltans it must seem that there has always been a Rest Haven. It has been located on Highway 61 for the past thirty years. Before that its founders, the late Mr. and Mrs. Woodrow Joseph, operated on Fourth Street. And before Fourth Street there was a Rest Haven connected with a long-departed bowling alley.

Since the death of Mom and Pop Joseph a few years ago, their children — Woody, Nadine, Diane, Yvonne, and Karen — have continued in the Rest Haven tradition. Woody, a bearded towering giant of a man, supervises the restaurant where his sisters Nadine and Diane still work. Their aunt Emily Baghdady and her son Joey are part of the Rest Haven family.

Woody started out in Rest Haven when he was 12 years old. "I hopped cars back in the days when we had curb service, washed dishes, really started out from the ground up," says Woody. The Josephs, who are Lebanese, are "a close family," according to Woody.

"We always got along, even though we lived and worked together," says Woody. "When Mama and Daddy died it was rough on us kids. But my sisters and I stuck together and we still have the same business that our parents had because we still serve the same good food the town was expecting from Rest Haven."

This family atmosphere is one of the nicest parts of dining in Rest Haven. By your second trip they know your name. Go back again and they ask about your grandchildren or if you got that tooth fixed that was bothering you. Famous Rest Haven customers have included country singers Charley Pride and Jerry Lee Lewis, as well as actor John Carradine. But "just plain folks" are the real celebrity customers as far as the Josephs are concerned.

House specialities include homemade chili, kibbie and cabbage rolls, shish-ka bob, gumbo, and homemade pizza that's nothing like those cardboard circles topped with tomato-flavored water that you find in other places. My favorite is the veal parmesan with spaghetti. I always ask for a doggie bag (no, I do not own a pet) because servings are generous. And sometimes I long for a wheel barrow to tote my over-stuffed body to the car.

If you're passing through Clarksdale, don't fail to stop at Rest Haven. Tell them Becky sent you, and ask Woody to save a slice of coconut pie for me. I'm looking for another sucker bet.

COMING IN THE NEXT ISSUE: A map of the 20 best taste treats off the beaten path.

My sister and her children sprang briskly through the back door, spewing the last frosty breath from the bitter cold outside as they hovered momentarily in front of the large corner fireplace. Their arrival concluded the gathering of the clan which had become traditional around our house at Christmas time.

The festivities began, Kids yearned to open presents early, adults tried to resist the urge to dive into fruitcakes, homemade candy, and date rolls. And just before the children's bedtime, Grandpa, my father, read the nativity story from the Gospel of Luke.

The children were soon off to bed, still begging for a few more minutes even as their mothers tucked them in and dimmed the lights, knowing that the little ones would need their rest for the full day ahead of them.

The ladies, my sister. sister-in-law, and mother joined us once again and I knew that my favorite time of celebration was near at hand. All mother needed was a gentle nudge to start on her famous childhood stories that we all loved. This year it was my own wife who innocently sparked the flame to life by simply asking, "How was Christmas when you were young?"

Little did she know she had asked precisely the question my mother wanted to answer, but Mother took her time, sipped her spice tea and settled back deeply into her overstuffed chair before beginning her less-than-casual reply.

"Where to begin?" she sighed, looking over our heads with a gaze that penetrated time, as well as the brick of the fireplace.

"The Christmases before my father's death were much like ours today in many ways. We lived in the country in what I always considered a big rambling house. Of course, at that time we had no electricity, and the house was heated by fireplaces and a huge wood burning cook stove that dominated the kitchen. It seems to me, as I think back, that our Christmas celebration always started around that old cook stove. The smells of fruitcakes, cookies, breads, and puddings; oh! especially the breads and the puddings, for they followed what seemed to be days of chopping nuts, figs, dried fruit, and the like. I

Memories of a Hard-time Delta Christmas

loe Robinson

was only four at the time, and playing under the kitchen table gave me a superior vantage point to grab what missed the bowls as my sisters prepared for the holiday cooking. Only after several day's chopping and fixing came the actual cooking, which was done in greased molasses buckets set first into a shallow pan of water and then on top of that cranky old wood-burning stove. Of course the end results seldom looked like the cover of a Betty Crocker box, but they sat on the stove and steamed and sputtered until the very air was full of Christmas. Our chores, however, weren't completed until we had popped the corn to string with cranberries on the tree . . . I remember." She resettled, sipped her tea and continued, almost unaware of our presence.

"I do remember the excitement around the house the next year when the Montgomery Ward box arrived with a set of real candles to go on the tree, with fancy little attachments made of brass. You know, we did put them on the tree, but never lit them for fear we'd burn the house down. Those first years brought nice gifts for all of us. One year I remember wanting a doll, just a simple doll for Christmas. That morning I ran to the tree and was dumbfounded to find not one doll, but twins, and a table and chairs (for tea of course)."

"The next year I got a cap pistol," she continued with a smug laugh. "because the only playmate I had was Arch, the little fellow next door. and since he wouldn't play dolls with me. I got the cap pistol and the accompanying cowboy hat in an effort of self defense. It didn't work out to well for me, for I never learned to shoot the thing so it didn't burn or pinch my fingers."

"Sometimes the gifts were a little strange, like the time I got a pair of roller skates and what was called a sidewalk bicycle. Now, I realize that doesn't seem so strange, but you must consider the fact that we lived over two miles from the nearest sidewalk; at any rate, I learned to cope. I taught myself to skate on the high front porch of the house, and once I taught myself right off the end of the darned thing, leaving petticoats and skirttails on the jagged egges edges of the floorboards. Soon I decided that the bicycle would be safer. even in the absence of the somewhat necessary sidewalk, so I took to the gravel road where the cars and wagons had packed it as hard as concrete, at least until a rain

"The next two years brought hard times after my father died. Our house burned and we lost everything, but we held our heads up high and moved into town, Agusta Street I believe it was. Anyway, soon after that the banks failed, and things begin to be quite different. Those Christmases, I realize now, are more vivid than any others."

She paused for a breath, which was a mistake, for my father, a notable bard in his own right, quickly took charge of the story line in a roomfull of us gaping listeners.

"I remember the good ole days" he boomed, assuring a shift of attention, "except they were not so good in many ways. From my vantage point I remember Christmas being measured by 'if' instead of 'how much'. It was rare to have something of your own, much less something new, in those days. Love, sharing, good food, and togetherness were the high points of Christmas at our house. We strained and struggled to follow the giving

Reminiscences continued from page 10

There were Junior-Senior Banquets, Senior Parties, Junior Parties, "Corral" Parties, and dinner parties in Benoit and other parts of the Delta which Prof and I attended together. There were even trips to Memphis and Little Rock to see "The King and I" and "South Pacific." I remember one trip to Little Rock to see "South Pacific." Miss Mollie and Polly Ryals accompanied us. Prof did not think Miss Molly's hearing aid always worked well. He asked her what one of the singers called her friend. To his embarrassement she answered quickly, "A bastard, George." She heard better than he thought! Also, her answer was so loud that even Prof would have like to drop into a hole. Raised eyebrows, shaking

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heads, and looks of disgust were all directed toward us.

Then there was the time he did not invite Miss Mollie to go to Memphis when he and I went to a Broadway play. Miss Mollie's daughter lived there, and she was hurt because Prof did not ask her to go visit Doris while we attended the performance. Later she appeared rather cool at the boarding house. To match her coolness, Prof wore an overcoat to the dinner table. Those were the days!

TO BE CONTINUED NEXT ISSUE

Turkey Fever continued from page 12

prey, and even to those ultra sharp telescopic turkey eyes, the graceful gliding movement was no more alarming than the shadow of a willow branch swaying lazily in a warm spring breeze. Gun butt met the hunter's shoulder as he swung slightly from the waist. His head began to swim with excitement, and

DELTA SCENE IS A GREAT HOLIDAY GIFT

See inside back page for details.

his lips parched as expectations of victory over this highly respected adversary seemed certain at last.

Suddenly, the placid quietness was shattered by a cracking oak limb, Mr. Fondren rolled backward onto his derriere, and granddaddy tom fired his after burners to take off, putting 100 yards of safety between himself and his overanxious assailant. After a few minutes of silent reflection on the sad state of present affairs and few mumbled words of self condemnation, Mr. Fondren, who is usually a reserved gentleman. cussed the turkey out loud, mechanically collected his gear. and without his wits stumbled back to the pick-up where he sat in a paralytic state, mumbling to himself as he waited for his son George.

He was oblivious to all surroundings and events during the trip home. Through supper, bath, and T.V., his eyes remained fixed straight ahead in a glassy state. Aroused from his chair at bedtime by Mrs. Fondren, he stumbled sleepily to bed uttering "I'll get you. I'll get you. I'll get you tomorrow."

P.S. He did get him a few days later. as shown by his trophy gobbler in the accompanying photograph.



Dr. Davidge earned his BA and MA in economics from the University of Southern Mississippi and his Ph.D. in economics from Ole Miss. He is currently an associate professor of economics at Delta State.



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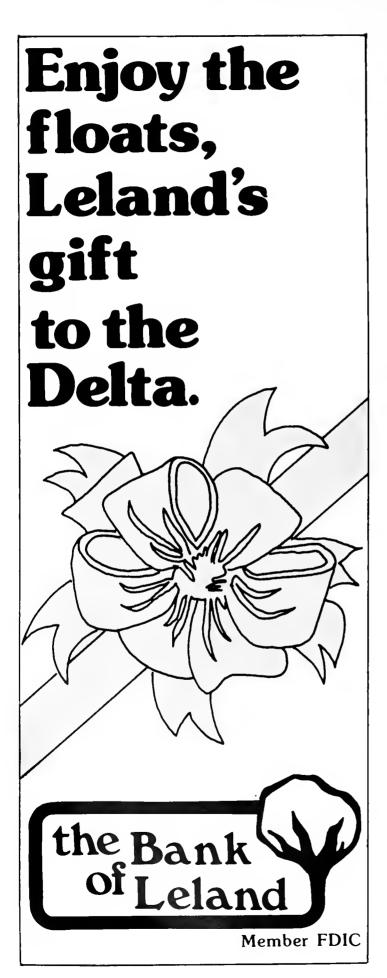
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There's Something About November

Malra Treece

There's something about November that is honest humble and strangely human. And brave.

Not like brazen, gaudy, fickle October flaunting crimson and gold and lying about a glowing forever more.

Nor like December warm for the moment with candles, fireside, and family except for the lonely.

November is like standing in the rain on a Monday morning waiting for a bus and missing it.

Or aching feet. Or paying bills.

Or lying in bed with a wet cloth over tired eyes or waking with a headache and not being able to remove the cap from the aspirin bottle.

November is realistic chill and damp and dreary but with days of calm and mellow light and beauty.

Hardworking, persevering, and very much like all the other Novembers.

Malra Treece, a Memphis resident, earned her BS degree from Arkansas State University, her masters from Memphis State and her Ph.D. from Ole Miss. She is currently a professor associated with Memphis State's College of Business Administration. Ms. Treece has written numerous articles and textbooks in addition to her poetry.

Editor's Note: We are grateful to the Editors of OLD HICKORY REVIEW for graciously allowing us to reprint the following article as it appeared in the Winter 1977-78 issue.

Passport continued from page 13

you'd like the sampan on this card. I remember the book you made me read about the Chinese kid and his kite. Having fun - wish you were here."

Another, in precise penmanship cultivated for forty years by Emma Gould, said: "Dear Miss Lou, This card with the Tower of London reminded me of our many talks about England. I am now finally having the opportunity to see so many things you mentioned. I only wish you were with me."

A card from Paris pictured the Eiffel Tower and had this message: "Cherchez la femme! You know me - that's what I'm doing. You'd love this burg. Butch Matthews, P.F.C." That card bore an A.P.O. address and was dated 1943.

Other cards from Venice. Australia, South America, the Far East had that feeling of the sender's urgency to share, for a moment, with Miss Lou whatever piece of the world he was in. Each wished for her to see it with him.

I was back in Macon City a month or so after Miss Lou died, and since I had not been there for her funeral. I decided to drive out to take some flowers to her grave. I found her plot with fresh spring green growing hopefully through the winter mound of earth, and I chuckled as I read her headstone (which she'd arranged for, I'm sure).

It said:

LOU BASSETT 1890-1977

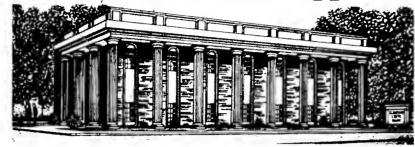
Having fine time.

Wish vou were here.

Mrs. Holcombe, a 1932 graduate of Delta State Teachers College, earned her MA from George Peabody College in 1933 and did graduate work at the University of Mississippi, University of Delaware and University of Florida. She is a retired associate professor of art at Delta State and has contributed illustrations to numerous magazines and journals in recent years.

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The Rainbow continued from page 17

cool wind ruffled their hair and filled their nostrils with the smell of the coming rain. "That sure looks good!" the boy's Granddaddy said. "We need a rain." "That's right!" Little Bill agreed.

Thankful for the cooler temperature, the Granddaddy began to hoe vigorously in order to finish out the row before the rain started. Little Bill watched the black clouds rush toward them, boiling and churning with pent-up fury. The gloom had spread quickly around them when the Granddaddy called to his grandson a few minutes later. "Looks like we're in for a real storm! We'd best go on up to the house," he said. With that, the old man began to trudge homeward. The lad dropped his stick and bolted pell mell after him. Little Bill could hear the rain coming in the distance as he ran to catch up with his Granddaddy. After reaching his Granddaddy's side, he half ran to keep up with the old man's longer stride. They watched their dog. Puppy, scurry under the front porch as the first drops of rain pelted the



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dirt road before them, each heavy droplet causing a small puff of dust to explode into the air as if a miniature bomb had burst. Half soaked from the ever-increasing downpour, the boy stumbled up the porch steps and lunged for the front door. His Granddaddy lumbered up the steps, shook his arms to dry them somewhat, and sat down on the porch in his rocker. Halfway through the doorway Little Bill hesitated, huffing and puffing to regain his breath, and glanced back at his Granddaddy. His young mind was attempting to choose between the shelter the living room offered or the comfort of his Granddaddy's presence when the fury of the storm was unleashed upon the farm.

Rain began to pound the tin roof and fierce lightning etched the sky. The windows rattled as if they trembled in fear of the awesome peals of thunder which besieged the countryside like a barrage of cannon, Marble-sized hail began to beat the flimsy roof until Little Bill thought that it would collapse. Shivering from fear and cold, the boy edged toward his Granddaddy's side and sat down. Slowly rocking back and forth, the old man meticulously dried his spectacles with a big railroad bandana. When his eyeglasses passed the inspection of his careful eye, he gently placed them on his weathered face and stuffed the bandana into his back pocket.

The pair watched wind-driven sheets of rain turn the front yard into a pond and the dirt road in front of their house into a quagmire. A blinding shaft of lightning which suddenly darted nearby coupled with an explosive clap of thunder caused both "Puppy" and Little Bill to howl. His Granddaddy nonchalantly reached into the bib of his Union overalls and pulled out a pouch of Country Gentleman Smoking Tobacco, Holding the rolling paper between index finger and thumb of his left hand and the pouch of tobacco with his right hand, he calmly poured a generous portion of tobacco onto the paper. With the drawstring of the pouch in his mouth, he gently tugged the pouch closed. After licking the paper, the Granddaddy gingerly rolled the cigarette.

"Are you scared, son?" he asked



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while lighting his smoke with a long kitchen match.

"Ye-yeah!" the boy stammered. "I used to be scared of these big ole storms myself, ya' know," he intimated, smiling at his grandson.

"Really?" Little Bill asked, amazed.

"Sure! Why, I used to run in the house, jump in the bed, and cover myself with a sheet everytime one come along."

The boy listened incredulously. Taking a deep draw from his smoke and rocking back gently, the boy's Granddaddy continued. "Then one day I realized that I didn't have to be scared because the Lord. He had me in His hands. the same way He had ole Noah.'

"Who was Noah, Granddaddy?" Little Bill asked.

The reply was drowned out by deafening thunder. The boy scooted closer to his Granddaddy and huddled at his feet on the porch. With a twinkle in his eye, the old man gazed fondly at his grandson and began again. "Long ago there lived a man called Noah. One day, God spoke to Noah and told him that it was gonna' rain a terrible rain like nobody'd ever seen and all the earth would be destroyed! Kinda like this rain, I guess," he said as he motioned with his arm toward the downpour. "God said, 'Noah, build you an ark."

"What's an ark?" Little Bill asked. "That's just what Noah wanted to know!" the Granddaddy exclaimed. "God said, 'That's a big boat, Noah.'"

Well sir, Noah built that big boat. Then one day, the rain came. The wind was howlin' and the lightning was flashin' all 'round and Noah was scared to death!"

Little Bill's eyes were wide with amazement and his mouth hung open as he hung on the old man's every word.

"But God shut him and his family up in the boat so they'd be alright and wouldn't drown. When it was all over. Noah and his family got off the boat and thanked God for taking care of them." Little Bill's Granddaddy shifted his weight in the rocker and puffed again on his cigarette before he continued. "God promised Noah that He'd never again destroy the earth with a flood. And He promised to always take

care of Noah. God put the rainbow up in the sky as a sign of his promise. An' whenever ole Noah saw the rainbow, he'd remember God's promise!" As he finished the story, the Granddaddy flicked the cigarette butt into the yard and extended his arms to his grandson; the boy crawled up into his Granddaddy's lap and snuggled next to the old man's chest, his Granddaddy's strong arms wrapped warmly around him.

"You think God will take care of us, Granddaddy?" Little Bill asked. gazing up into his Granddaddy's face.

Looking intently at the boy, the old man tousled his grandson's hair with his big calloused hand and said, "Everything will be alright. son.

The complexion of the storm appeared to change in Little Bill's mind; the flashing lightning and the pounding thunder no longer threatened him. Oddly enough, it somehow comforted him. No longer fearing the storm, he relaxed with a sigh. His small lips spread into a broad smile.

The fury of the storm soon abated and the rain lessened. After the rain ceased, the clouds began to break up leaving fluffy patches of vapor outlined with a vibrant blue sky. The sun's brilliant rays burst from behind these clouds radiantly illuminating the green, rolling hills. The trees, flowers, grass, and fields of grain seemed to stand taller and more erect; their wet leaves sparked with a bright green lustre. The soft breeze blowing into the nostrils of the pair in the rocker had an incredibly clean, invigorating smell. Looking a the peaceful sky filled with chirping birds swooping about, the boy spied a vast, beautiful rainbow stretching from horizon to horizon. It was the first real rainbow he had ever seen. He sat up with excitement in his Granddaddy's lap. "Look, Granddaddy!" he cried, pointing toward the rainbow. "God's rainbow! He did take care of us!"

Kerry Wright, an English major in his junior year, is currently enrolled at Delta State University.



Members of the Jackson Ballet during a performance of "Sylphides."

Dance continued from page 19

electronic music and computer lighting, "Don't analyze so. I don't care if you understand it. I just want you to enjoy it."

Another Mississippian who has been brought home for the festival in Jackson is John Butler, world renowned choreographer, the first to be commissioned to do a new ballet for Mikhail Baryshnikov after the Russian's defection to the West. Back in the state to choreograph a work for Jackson Ballet's presentation at the 1976 Festival. the Greenwood native commented, "It's good to find so much interest in dance here at home. When I was growing up in the Delta, dance outside the ballroom also was outside the pale to most boys."

Principal dancer with the New

York City Ballet Edward Villela has said, "These days it's all right to be sensitive. It's o.k. now for a football player to write or read poetry or go to a museum." Villela is another colossus of dance who has been brought to Mississippi by Jackson Ballet Guild, with assistance from the Mississippi Arts Commission.

And now at the barres of Mississippi: Jobie Best-Davis' Mississippi Ballet Theatre is preparing a repeat of its NUTCRACKER, for which the Atlanta Ballet again will join the MBT dancers. Prior to the Auditorium performances, excerpts done by the Jackson performers will be taken into the schools of the area. USM is making ready for an encore of its NUTS. Thalia Mara's dancers are rehearsing BABES IN TOYLAND for holiday viewing. It's a time to dance.



Carla Fracci and Mikhail Baryshnikov (left and center) work out under close supervision of choreographer John Butler (right).

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Delta Christmas continued from page 21

principle of the season. This often meant carrying hams, bacon, or sweet potatoes and molasses, whatever we had an excess of, into town to sell. This gave us extra money for presents, fruit, and goodies which were all Yuletide novelties. The old saying about getting a cap pistol one year and the caps the next was almost true in some cases.

"My most vivid memory, though, was my dad sneaking the fruit for Christmas into the house without us knowing, he thought. Of course, the fruit wasn't covered in air tight plastic as it is now, and the rich aroma would spread quickly all over the house from the traditional hiding place in the attic. Raisins were cured on the back of the stove and they weren't seedless by any means. Coconut had to be shredded for ambrosia which would accompany every Christmas feast, and you had to 'court the cook' to get any fresh milk from those coconuts before Christmas day." He rose to stoke the fire which gave Mother a chance to squeeze back into center ring.

"You know, during those days it was really hard to have anything,' she reiterated, "and what we had was really appreciated. Christmas came to mean a family get-together. There were at least five of us at home with Mother for a long time. My oldest brother, Ryan, had married and moved his family back out of town to farm 'the place', and my oldest sister, Marjorie, was teaching school in Cleveland, but came home to spend the holidays at my aunt and uncle's home in Indianola. I remember going to Aunt Ratty's: she and Mariorie would make all sorts of cookies. Katherine, my cousin, and I got to eat the broken ones. We must have licked a thousand bowls of cake batter and would always fight over the last spoonful from the candy

"We always had turkey at Ratty's, but my brother had a few geese on the farm, and to this day I've tasted nothing better than the goose and dressing his wife used to cook up at Christmas.

"During the hard times the gifts

were few and far between, but I still remember them vividly. My all-time favorite was a puzzle of the United States, and I'll have you know that I worked that puzzle so much that I can still name the states, all forty-eight of them." We giggled, but Mother went on, none the wiser. "And then there was pen, a fountain pen it was, that you filled with ink on one end, and had a mechanical pencil on the other. I always broke the skinny lead, and the ink always lasted longer than the accompanying box of lead.

"In our stockings we found penny candy sticks that cost a quarter now, and as I remember, they were bigger then; well, back to the story.

There was always something special going on at the church at Christmas time. The congregation of Indianola's Presbyterian Church was so small that it took all of us to put together a Christmas program. Looking back, I wonder who was left to watch it.

"Mrs. Sid Davis, Miss Lillian we called her, worked with the young people in the Church. She came up with a new program every year. It seemed that we would practice for weeks, and, since I carried a tune better than some, I always had to sing, sometimes alone and sometimes with a group. I'm certain we never sounded like the heavenly hosts, but we tried hard and sang loud. The accoustics in that little church must have been awful for I can still hear Miss Lillian screaming, 'SING LOUDER!' from the back pew. Now I'm telling you this was no slip-shod operation you know; we even had speaking parts. Dear Miss. Lillian. I still wonder where she got all those glorious ideas.

"If my memory serves me correctly, Christmas always seemed to be getting ready for something rather than the actual day itself. All those family gatherings, the food, the church programs. This may not sound like much excitement to you with all of your cars, and ski trips, and such, but for a young girl like I was, and times being like they were, it was pure joy to me:"

We all nodded and smiled as mother quickly brushed a sentimental tear from the corner of her eye. Later that night, as I settled between the crisp, cold sheets of my childhood bed. I thought of the stories I had heard. I had my annual tussle with the memories we've come to know as the Ghost of Christmas Past, Even with all our cards, and ski trips, and such, could be Mother was right. It just might be that those were the good-ole-days in more ways than we'll every understand, those rough, but well-remembered days of a Hard-Time Delta Christmas.

Footnote: My father was born Ned L. Robinson to Mr. and Mrs. Oliver S. Robinson of Greenville, 1919. My mother was born Willie Martin Murphy to Mr. and Mrs. Joseph Murphy of Indianola, 1921

Joe Robinson is a 1978 graduate of Delta State where he earned a BA degree in music. He is currently employed with the DSU Public Information Office.

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